

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 23-51 are presently active in this case. The present Amendment amends Claims 23-44; and adds Claims 45-51.

The outstanding Office Action objected to the claims and Abstract because of informalities. Claims 23-43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Jenniges et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2001/0032499).

Claims 43-44 were indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter. In response, method Claim 43 is rewritten in independent form. In addition, new Claims 45-46 are added. Claims 45-46 are apparatus claims are drafted in means-plus-functions limitations, the claimed functions corresponding to the functions of allowable Claim 43. Thus, Claims 43-46 are believed to be allowable at least for the reasons stated at page 4, lines 4-8 of the Office Action.

In response to the objection to the Abstract, the Abstract is amended to correct the noted informalities and to comply better with U.S. practice.

Independent Claim 23 is amended in order to clarify Applicant's invention. In order to vary the scope of protection recited in the claims, new dependent Claims 47-51 are added. The changes to the claims find non-limiting support in the disclosure as originally filed, for example at page 15, lines 7-29 and in Figs. 2-4. Therefore, the changes to the claims are not believed to raise a question of new matter.¹

¹ See MPEP 2163.06 stating that "information contained in any one of the specification, claims or drawings of the application as filed may be added to any other part of the application without introducing new matter."

In response to the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), and in view of the present Amendment, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this rejection and traverses the rejection, as discussed next.

Briefly recapitulating, Applicant's invention, as recited in amended Claim 23, relates to a mobile test rig for testing a wheel-tire assembly. The test rig includes a self-driven platform, capable of following rectilinear and circular trajectories *on a test track*. The test rig also includes an instrument module mounted on the platform and configured to test the wheel-tire assembly, *the instrument module being configured to place the wheel-tire assembly in contact with the test track*, to orient the wheel-tire assembly in all directions, to lean the wheel-tire assembly, and to apply a vertical effort to the wheel-tire assembly. The test rig further includes first swivelling axles mounted to the platform and equipped with suspensions and driving wheels *in contact with the test track*. A processing unit associated to a memory is configured to control the instrument module and the first swiveling axles. The test rig also includes means for controlling a test cycle permitting orientation of the wheel-tire assembly, and a load applied to the assembly.

Turning now to the applied prior art, the Jenniges et al. publication discloses a tire and wheel testing machine that includes a road surface simulator 14 with an endless belt 16 that forms a revolving surface. See paragraph [0021] and Figs. 1-2. The Jenniges et al. publication, however, does not disclose the claimed mobile test rig. In particular, the Jenniges et al. publication fails to disclose the claimed self-driven platform, capable of following rectilinear and circular trajectories on a test track, as required by amended Claim 23. In addition, the Jenniges et al. publication fails to disclose the claimed instrument module being *configured to place the wheel-tire assembly in contact with the test track*. The Jenniges et al. publication also fails to disclose the claimed swivelling axles equipped with driving wheels *in contact with the test track*, as required by amended Claim 23. Accordingly,

Applicant respectfully submits that the present Amendment overcomes the 35 U.S.C. § 102 rejection based on the Jenniges et al. publication.²

Further, it is not clear from the Office Action how the Jenniges et al. publication meets all of the limitations recited in dependent Claims 24-42. Clearly, the Jenniges et al. publication does not meet a number of these limitations, in addition to those recited in new dependent Claims 47-51. Therefore, the Jenniges et al. publication fails to disclose every feature recited in Applicant's claims, so that Claims 23-42 and 47-51 are not anticipated by the Jenniges et al. publication.

Applicant further provides these additional remarks to emphasize some of the potential benefits of the claimed test rig. As explained in Applicant's specification,³ the claimed test rig can be used to reproduce all of the conditions of use of a tire to be tested, including the most extreme in terms of load, skid angle and speed. The claimed test rig can be used to directly test the tire on the landing runways: in cold or hot weather, or dry or deteriorated (frost, rain, etc.) runways. The claimed test rig may advantageously be transportable for example on a semi-trailer. Moreover, the claimed test rig may be used so as to advantageously permit to test the tire on different surfaces that are characteristic of airport runways for rectilinear and/or circular trajectories. An aircraft tire can also be tested on the ground in situations or rolling, landing or take off at low speed, and/or at high speed.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal Allowance. A Notice of Allowance for Claims 23-51 is earnestly solicited.

² See MPEP 2131: "A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference," (Citations omitted) (emphasis added). See also MPEP 2143.03: "All words in a claim must be considered in judging the patentability of that claim against the prior art."

³ See e.g., from page 5, line 29 to page 7, line 5 and at page 8, lines 12-13.

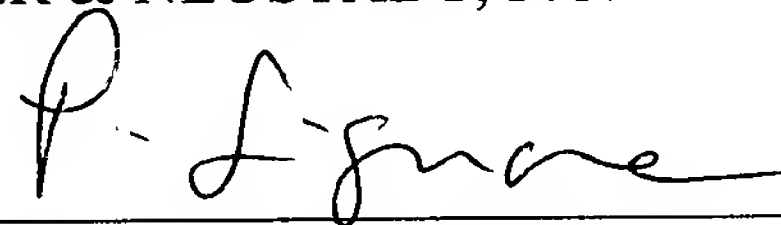
Application No. 10/588,907

Reply to Office Action of November 14, 2008

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the below listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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